

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 AID-05 CPR-01 EB-08 OC-06

CCO-00 /107 W

-----011023 281114Z /17

R 280805Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9146

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0384

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 4 DIMPTD

TAGS: PDIP PEPR LA UK GW

SUBJECT: BRITISH TO PROTEST LPDR IMPOSED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

REF: A VIENTIANE 0363, B 77 VIENTIANE 1587

1. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS INSTRUCTED THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE TO LODGE A WRITTEN PROTEST REGARDING THE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED PFDR TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON USE BY DIPLOMATS OF THE THA DEUA-NONG KHAI BORDER CROSSING POINT (REF A). THE INSTRUCTIONS REQUIRE THE EMBASSY TO REFERENCE AN EARLIER BRITISH PROTEST OF LAO RESTRICTIONS ON DIPLOMATS' TRAVEL INSIDE LAOS (REF B).

2. THE BRITISH EMBASSY IS CURRENTLY PREPARING A NOTE AS PER INSTRUCTIONS WHICH WILL PROTEST TO THE LAO THE RECENTLY IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS AS : 1) BEING "FAR IN
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EXCESS OF LEGITIMATE SECURITY CONCERNS;" 2) INTERFERING WITH THE LEGITIMATE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRITISH EMBASSY;
3) VIOLATING ARTICLES 25 AND 26 OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION; AND 4) BEING DISCRIMINATORY INASMUCH AS THE RESTRICTIONS DO NOT APPLY TO THAI DIPLOMATS. THE BRITISH DEMARCHE WILL ALSO NOTE THAT THE RESTRICTIONS ARE "DETRIMENTAL" TO LAO-BRITISH RELATIONS.

3. LAO FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUNE SIPRASEUTH IN CONVERSATION WITH A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL IN BANGKOK DURING PHOUNE'S RECENT VISIT TO THAILAND, SAID THAT IT WAS STILL POSSIBLE TO ENTER OR LEAVE LAOS BY LAND OR AIR IF PROPER MFA AUTHORIZATION HAD BEEN RECEIVED BEFOREHAND.

4. BRITISH OFFICIALS HERE TOLD US MARCH 28 THAT THE LAO RESPONDED TO AN EARLIER BRITISH PROTEST REGARDING RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL BY DIPLOMATS INSIDE LAOS (REF B) BY NOTING THAT IF ANY EMBASSY WAS DISPLEASED WITH THE CONDITIONS GOVERNING ITS PRESENCE IN THE LPDR, IT WAS FREE TO LEAVE. (THE WEST GERMANS REPORTEDLY RECEIVED A SIMILAR RESPONSE TO THEIR PROTEST OF INTERNAL TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.)

5. COMMENT: THE BRITISH CHARACTERIZED THEIR PROTEST AS A STRONG ONE. WE AGREE. PHOUNE'S ASSERTION THAT DIPLOMATS COULD STILL ENTER OR LEAVE LAOS BY LAND PRESUMABLY WAS IN REFERENCE TO THE COMPLICATED PROCEDURE BY WHICH A DIPLOMAT MAY TRANSIT THE LAO-THAI BORDER WITH A PROPERLY CLEARED VEHICLE (REF A).
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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 28 mar 1978
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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